

## Part II, Chapter 4

# Findings from Case File Review

Recently established and modified child support orders were reviewed and analyzed to determine how the District of Columbia Child Support Guideline is being applied and the extent that deviations from the Guideline are made. The Commission considered these findings while developing their recommendations. This analysis also fulfills a federal requirement to conduct a case file review.

### DATA SOURCES AND SAMPLING

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Three data sources are used for this analysis.

- ❖ Paternity and Support Case Jackets
- ❖ Domestic Relations Case Jackets
- ❖ The automated system used by the Child Support Enforcement Division (CSED)

Most child support orders are established or modified through the Paternity and Support or Domestic Relations Divisions. The Paternity and Support Division hears IV-D child support cases and the Domestic Relations Division hears non-IV-D cases. It is possible that some child support orders may be part of other court proceedings such as abuse and neglect hearings. However, these orders are excluded from the analysis because they are likely to be few in number and are not readily identifiable without searching files one at time.

#### Paternity and Support Case Jackets

A random sample of recently established or modified orders was drawn from the Paternity and Support Case file room, where orders paying through the Collection and Disbursement Unit are filed. A master list of Paternity and Support case jackets was obtained through the CSED automated system as described below. The only difference is that the master list used for the random sample was based on the first test of the download, which only included 2001 and 2002 orders.

#### Domestic Relations Case Jackets

When data collection began, PSI did not have access to a master list of recently established or modified Domestic Relations orders. As a consequence, PSI randomly pulled from all Domestic Relations Case Jackets. This included Domestic Relations Case Jackets without child support orders (e.g., divorce cases without children). This was a very time consuming process and yielded few jackets with child support orders. Midway through this effort, the Court was able to download a list of all Domestic Relations child support orders from the Superior Court automated system (DMI). The Court's automated system records this

information to track a requirement that a child support action must be disposed of within 45 days. The master list includes orders established or modified from 1999 through 2002.

### **CSED Automated System**

All cycle (current) orders established or modified in calendar years 2000-2003 were selected for analysis. This cumulated to over 4,000 orders. It includes all IV-D orders and non-IV-D orders that pay through the Collection and Disbursement Unit. Data fields include order amounts; cycle frequency (e.g., weekly and monthly); types of orders (e.g., current and arrears orders, judgments, fees and Medicaid); case status (i.e., public assistance and IV-D); arrears and delinquencies; the amount paid; the amount paid through income withholding; and, number of children. To ease the data download, extant data fields were used whenever possible and computation of new data fields was limited to simple programming. For example, child support collections are recorded as a running total on the automated system, so computer programming is required to create a data field that represents collections over a specified time period. To simplify programming, the specified time periods are calendar years.

Information was not obtained from the guideline calculator screen because the saved screen is likely to be the most recent calculation and not necessarily the one used to establish the order amount. The guideline calculator screen, however, has a data field that can be populated to indicate a guideline deviation.

### **Sample Size**

Sample size was determined with respect to measuring the guideline deviation rate with a 95 percent level of confidence. These counts are shown in the second column of Exhibit 12. There are two counts for Domestic Relations Records because the precise number of child support orders issued per year by Domestic Relations is unknown, but based on the DMI report and an exploratory analysis it appears to be 100 to 300 orders per year.

<b>Exhibit 12 Sample Size</b>			
<b>Child Support Judgment Issued</b>	<b>Sample Size Needed for Statistical Significance</b>	<b>Targeted Sample Size</b>	<b>Cases Reviewed</b>
<b>Paternity and Support Records</b>	367	400	408
<b>Domestic Relations Records</b>	129 (if 100 issues per year) 180 (if 300 issues per year)	200	199
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>600</b>	<b>607</b>

The targeted sample size was set slightly above the required sample size to allow cases to be dropped if there were notable errors in data collection (e.g., the same jacket was reviewed twice.) The last column in Exhibit 12 shows that the number of cases reviewed exceeded the sample size required.

## GUIDELINE DEVIATIONS (DEPARTURES)

As evident in Exhibit 13, the District of Columbia has a low guideline deviation rate. [Deviations are actually called “departures” in the District’s Guideline.] A deviation from the Guideline amount was indicated in 10 percent of the jackets reviewed. The comparable national rate based on a study conducted in 1996 is 17 percent.<sup>27</sup> Since the national study has not been updated, we also compare the District’s deviation rate to those of other states that recently conducted case file reviews. As evident from Exhibit 14, the District also has a relatively low to average deviation rate when compared to other recent state-specific studies.

<b>Exhibit 13</b> <b>District of Columbia</b> <b>Guideline Departures (Deviations)</b>			
	All Jackets Reviewed (n=606)	Domestic Relations Jackets (n=199)	Paternity and Support Jackets (n=407)
<b>Guideline Departures (Deviations)</b> Not Applied (Departures)	10.1%	12.1%	9.1%
<b>Departures</b>	(n=61)	(n=24)	(n=37)
By Agreement of the Parties	67.2%	83.3%	56.8%
Other Reason	9.8%	8.4% <sup>a</sup>	10.8% <sup>b</sup>
Reason Not Found in Jacket	23.0%	8.3%	32.4%
<b>Amount and Direction of Departures</b>	(n=36)	(n=5)	(n=31)
Upward Departures	36.1%	40%	35.5%
Average \$ Difference (Monthly)	\$141.71	\$237.83	\$124.23
Downward Departures	63.9%	60%	64.5%
Average \$ Difference (Monthly)	-\$192.00	-\$258.33	-\$182.57

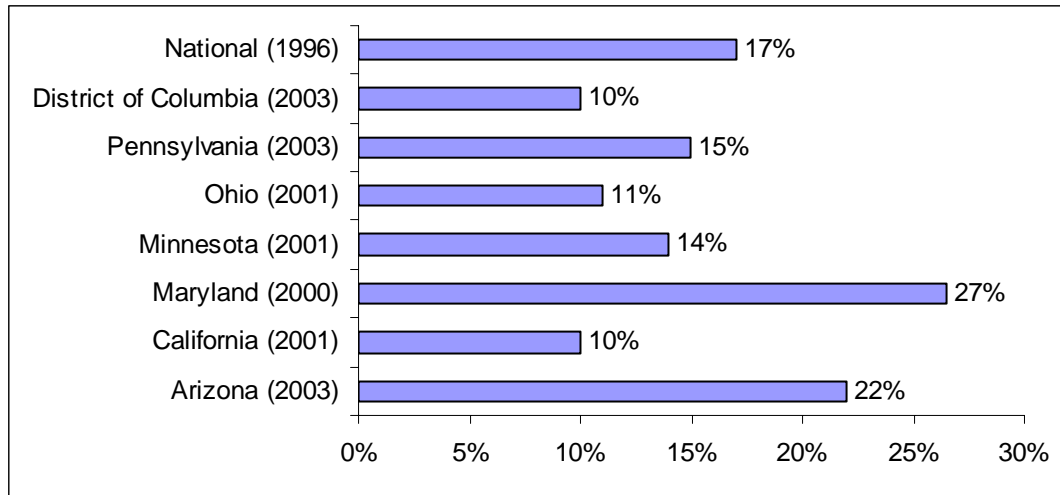
<sup>a</sup>Reasons provided for departure from the Guideline in Domestic Relations jackets: Custodial parent’s income is significantly higher than the noncustodial parent’s income and unable to determine the noncustodial parent’s income so the child’s needs were determined and split equally between the parties.

<sup>b</sup>Reasons provided for departure from the Guideline in Paternity and Support jackets: noncustodial parent’s IRS debt and other child support obligations; financial status of the noncustodial parent; noncustodial parent in school and only working 30 hours per week; and, SSDI benefits exceed child support owed.

Exhibit 13 also shows that the deviation rate is somewhat higher for Domestic Relations jackets (non-IV-D cases) than Paternity and Support jackets (IV-D cases). The percent of Domestic Relations jackets reviewed with a deviation is 12 percent; whereas, the comparable rate among Paternity and Support jackets is 9 percent. In addition, Exhibit 13 shows that most deviations in the District are due to agreement between the parties (this was the reason among 67% of the deviations). Nationally, 21 percent of deviations result from agreement of the parties. Also evident in Exhibit 13 is that more than one third (36%) of the deviations resulted in obligation amounts that were higher than the presumptive Guideline amount. The remaining 64 percent of deviations resulted in obligations that were lower than the presumptive Guideline amount.

<sup>27</sup>CSR, Incorporated and the American Bar Association, *Evaluation of Child Support Guidelines: Volumes I and II*, Report to Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, Contract No. 105-94-8373 (March 1996).

**Exhibit 14**  
**Guidelines Deviation Rates in Other State Case File Reviews<sup>28</sup>**



## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF JACKETS REVIEWED

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Exhibit 15 presents general characteristics of the cases reviewed. Specific characteristics identified in Exhibit 15 are highlighted below.

- ❖ *The petitioner is most often the mother.* In over 96 percent of the cases reviewed, the party petitioning for support is the mother. The father is the petitioner more frequently in Domestic Relations cases (7%) than Paternity and Support cases (1%).
- ❖ *Orders typically cover one child.* The majority (72%) of the orders reviewed cover one child. The comparable national percentage of one-child orders is 59 percent.<sup>29</sup> Domestic Relations orders cover two or more children more often (42% of the Domestic Relations orders reviewed) than Paternity and Support orders (21% of the Paternity and Support orders reviewed).

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<sup>28</sup>Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Report to the General Assembly, Ohio's Child Support Guidelines (2001). Beld, Jo Michelle, Child Support Enforcement Division, Child Support Guidelines Review: Case Data Analysis Final Report, Prepared for the Minnesota Department of Human Services (2001). University of Maryland, School of Social Work, Child Support Guidelines Review: Case-Level Report, Prepared for the Maryland Department of Human Resources, Child Support Enforcement Administration (2000). Policy Studies Inc., Pennsylvania Child Support Guidelines Review and Deviation Study, Submitted to Department of Public Welfare, Bureau of Child Support Enforcement (2003). Judicial Council of California, Review of Statewide Uniform Child Support Guideline (2001). Policy Studies Inc., Arizona Child Support Guidelines, Findings from a Case File Review, Submitted to the Supreme Court of Arizona, Administrative Office of the Courts (2003).

<sup>29</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, "Custodial Mothers and Fathers and Their Child Support: 1999" *Current Population Reports: Consumer Income*, P60-217, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C (October 2002).

- ❖ *The average age of the oldest child is 8 years old.* Children covered by Domestic Relations orders are slightly older (9 years old, on average) than children covered by Paternity and Support orders (8 years old, on average).
- ❖ *District of Columbia order amounts are close to the national average.* The average District order is \$399 per month, or \$4,787 per year. The comparable national average is \$396 per month.<sup>30</sup>
- ❖ *The presumptive Guideline amount is applied in half the cases.* The current Guideline calculator determines a presumptive amount, along with a high and low variation of three percent, which is permitted by the Guideline. In almost half of the cases, the presumptive amount is applied. The low variation is applied in 27 percent of the cases, while the high variation amount is applied in 11 percent of the cases. The remaining 11 percent of the cases have orders that fall between the low and high variation amounts.
- ❖ *Most cases reviewed were newly established orders.* Only 18 percent of the cases reviewed were modified orders.

<b>Exhibit 15</b>			
<b>Characteristics of the Cases Reviewed</b>			
	All Jackets Reviewed (n=606)	Domestic Relations Jackets (n=199)	Paternity and Support Jackets (n=407)
<b>Petitioner is</b>			
Father	3.3%	7.5%	1.2%
Mother	96.4%	92.0%	98.5%
Grandparent	0.3%	0.5%	0.3%
<b>Respondent is</b>			
Father	96.7%	92.5%	98.8%
Mother	3.3%	7.5%	1.2%
<b>Number of Children Covered by the Order</b>			
One Child	72.0%	58.3%	78.8%
Two Children	19.9%	29.1%	15.3%
Three Children	4.8%	7.0%	3.7%
Four or More Children	3.3%	5.5%	2.2%
<i>Average Number of Children</i>	<i>1.4 Children</i>	<i>1.6 Children</i>	<i>1.3 Children</i>
<b>Age of the Oldest Child</b>	(n=596)	(n=197)	(n=399)
One year or younger	12.1%	7.1%	14.5%
2-5 years old	27.7%	29.9%	26.6%
6-10 years old	30.9%	28.9%	31.8%
11-15 years old	20.6%	19.8%	21.1%
16-20 years old	7.6%	10.7%	6.0%
21 years or older <sup>a</sup>	1.2%	3.6%	--
<i>Average Age</i>	<i>8.2 Years</i>	<i>9.2 Years</i>	<i>7.8 Years</i>

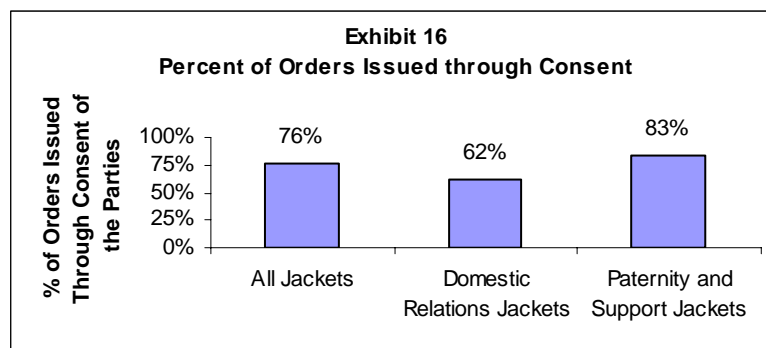
<sup>30</sup> U.S. Census (1999).

<b>Exhibit 15 Characteristics of the Cases Reviewed</b>			
	All Jackets Reviewed (n=606)	Domestic Relations Jackets (n=199)	Paternity and Support Jackets (n=407)
<b>Monthly Child Support Obligation</b>			
\$0	0.7%	1.5%	0.2%
\$50	3.8%	8.5%	1.5%
\$51-\$100	1.8%	1.5%	2.0%
\$101-\$200	14.0%	9.5%	16.2%
\$201-\$300	22.3%	17.6%	24.6%
\$301-\$400	19.8%	18.1%	20.6%
\$401-\$500	14.4%	15.6%	13.8%
\$501-\$600	8.1%	7.0%	8.6%
\$601-\$800	8.7%	10.1%	8.1%
\$801-\$1,000	2.6%	3.5%	2.2%
\$1,001 or more	3.8%	7.0%	2.2%
Average Monthly Obligation	\$398.95	\$446.16	\$375.86
Median Monthly Obligation	\$333.67	\$379.17	\$325.00
<b>Guideline Amount Applied<sup>b</sup></b>	(n=420)	(n=66)	(n=354)
Presumptive Amount	49.8%	66.7%	46.6%
High Variation	11.2%	13.6%	10.7%
Low Variation	27.9%	9.0%	31.4%
Other Amount in Range	11.2%	10.6%	11.3%
<b>New or Modified Order</b>	(n=599)	(n=199)	(n=400)
New	81.8%	80.9%	82.2%
Modified	18.2%	19.1%	17.8%

<sup>a</sup>This data field reflects the age of the oldest child born to the parents regardless whether the oldest child was subject to the instant order. There were seven cases where the oldest child born to the parents was 21 years old or more.

<sup>b</sup>There was evidence to suggest that the Guideline was applied in 36.7 of the Domestic Relations jackets and 87.7% of the Paternity and Support Jackets. Nonetheless, the presumptive, high and low Guideline amounts were not always provided in the jacket nor was there always sufficient income information to calculate the Guideline amounts.

Exhibit 16 shows that most parties (76%) consented to the order. The percent of consents is higher among the Paternity and Support cases (83%) than the Domestic Relations cases (62%). The higher rate among Paternity and Support cases may be linked to the adjudication of paternity. In almost half (49%) of the Paternity and Support cases reviewed, paternity was adjudicated. Once paternity is determined, the noncustodial parent may simply agree to child support because it is the logical next step and purpose of establishing paternity in the first place is typically to obtain support for the child. In the other half of the cases (51%) where paternity was not adjudicated, the noncustodial parent voluntarily acknowledged paternity in about one third of these cases and paternity was not an issue in the other two thirds.



## INCOME OF THE PARENTS

Exhibit 17 provides details of the income of the parents in the cases reviewed. A caveat to these statistics is that income was not usually available in Domestic Relations case jackets. Income was less likely to be available in consented orders, particularly since it is not required.

Exhibit 17 Income of Parties to Child Support Orders			
	All Jackets Reviewed (n=606)	Domestic Relations Jackets (n=199)	Paternity and Support Jackets (n=407)
<b>Petitioner Annual Gross Income</b>	(n=520)	(n=116)	(n=404)
\$0	26.7%	8.6%	31.9%
\$1 - \$10,000	6.0%	9.5%	5.0%
\$10,001 - \$15,000	7.5%	9.5%	6.9%
\$15,001 - \$20,000	11.2%	15.5%	9.9%
\$20,001 - \$25,000	12.5%	12.1%	12.6%
\$25,001 - \$30,000	12.1%	10.3%	12.6%
\$30,001 - \$40,000	14.0%	18.1%	12.9%
\$40,001 - \$50,000	6.3%	11.2%	5.0%
\$50,001 - \$75,000	3.3%	5.2%	2.7%
Over \$75,000	0.4%	--	0.5%
Average Annual Income	\$19,630	\$24,907	\$18,115
Median Annual Income	\$19,503	\$23,278	\$18,300
<b>Respondent Annual Gross Income</b>	(n=510)	(n=108)	(n=402)
\$0	2.0%	2.8%	1.7%
\$1 - \$10,000	4.5%	6.5%	4.0%
\$10,001 - \$15,000	13.3%	11.1%	13.9%
\$15,001 - \$20,000	18.4 %	18.5%	18.4%
\$20,001 - \$25,000	15.1%	10.2%	16.4%
\$25,001 - \$30,000	15.9%	9.3%	17.6%
\$30,001 - \$35,000	11.9%	14.8%	11.2%
\$35,001 - \$40,000	7.4%	4.6%	8.2%
\$40,001 - \$50,000	6.7%	9.3%	6.0%
\$50,001 - \$75,000	3.7%	8.3%	2.5%
Over \$75,000	1.2%	4.6%	0.2%
Average Annual Income	\$27,293	\$36,062	\$24,937
Median Annual Income	\$24,000	\$25,434	\$23,610
<b>Petitioners with Incomes Above Disregard Amount</b>	(n=520)	(n=83)	(n=404)
CP's income is above disregard	52.1%	62.9%	49.0%
CP's income is not above disregard	47.9%	37.1%	51.0%
<b>Offset Percentage for Petitioner Income</b>	(n=264)	(n=67)	(n=197)
1-25%	43.9%	43.3%	44.2%
26-50%	41.3%	43.3%	40.6%
51-75%	12.5%	13.4%	12.2%
76-100%	2.3%	0%	3.0%
Average Disregard Percentage	32.97%	30.98%	33.64%

Exhibit 17 Income of Parties to Child Support Orders			
	All Jackets Reviewed (n=606)	Domestic Relations Jackets (n=199)	Paternity and Support Jackets (n=407)
<b>Documentation of Petitioner Income</b>	(n=391)	(n=108)	(n=283)
Paystubs	66.8%	30.6%	80.6%
W-2 or Tax Returns	2.0%	4.6%	1.1%
Imputed	0.5%	0.9%	0.4%
Oral Representation	11.8%	16.7%	9.9%
Financial Statement	3.1%	11.1%	--
Other	4.6%	9.3%	2.8%
Written in Order/Source Unspecified	11.3%	26.9%	5.3%
<b>Documentation of Respondent Income</b>	(n=476)	(n=102)	(n=374)
Paystubs	60.9%	26.5%	70.3%
W-2 or Tax Returns	2.9%	3.9%	2.7%
Imputed	0.2%	--	0.3%
Oral Representation	11.6%	14.7%	10.7%
Financial Statement	1.3%	4.9%	0.3%
Other	6.5%	15.7%	4.0%
Written in Order/Source Unspecified	16.6%	34.3%	11.8%
<b>Public Assistance<sup>a</sup></b>			
Petitioner Receiving Assistance	21.3%	7.5%	28.0%
Petitioner Average Monthly Amount	\$298	\$383	\$385
Respondent Receiving Assistance	0.7%	1.0%	0.5%

Highlights of Exhibit 17 include the following.

- ❖ *Average income of the petitioner (custodial parent) is relatively low.* The petitioner's average income is \$19,630 per year. Average income of petitioners in Paternity and Support cases is lower (\$18,115 per year) than that of petitioners in Domestic Relations cases (\$24,907 per year). The average income in Domestic Relations cases is comparable to the national average of \$23,520.
- ❖ *Average income of the respondent (noncustodial parent) is relatively low.* The respondent's average income is \$27,293 per year in the District. As is true with petitioner income, the average income of respondents in Domestic Relations cases is higher (\$36,062 per year) than in Paternity and Support cases (\$24,937). There is no comparable national statistic, however, the comparable amount based on a similar study in California found the average annual income of noncustodial parents to be \$36,444 per year.
- ❖ *In almost half of the cases the petitioner's income is below the disregard.* In over half of the Paternity and Support cases and almost a third of the Domestic Relations cases reviewed, the petitioner's annual income is below the disregard amount, so there is no offset to the noncustodial parent's obligation. This includes cases where the custodial parent has no income and is on public assistance. In cases with an offset for custodial parent income, the average offset is 30 percent of the obligation.
- ❖ *Income is usually documented with paystubs.* Income is usually proven to the court through the use of paystubs. In fact, two-thirds of all petitioners and over 60 percent of all respondents documented their income using paystubs.
- ❖ *The petitioner receives public assistance in 20 percent of child support cases.* In just over 20 percent of the cases reviewed, the petitioner was receiving public assistance at the time the order was established. The average amount of assistance is \$298 per month.



## Relative Income of the Parties

Exhibit 18 displays the relative incomes of the parents for jackets where both parents' incomes were recorded. In a quarter (25%) of the cases, both parents earn \$20,000 per year or less. In less than one percent of the cases reviewed, both parents earned over \$50,000 per year.

<b>Exhibit 18</b>						
<b>Parents' Relative Incomes</b>						
Paternity and Support Jackets (n = 401)						
	Custodial Parent's Income					
	\$0	\$1-20,000	\$20,001-30,000	\$30,001-50,000	\$50,001 or more	ALL NCPs
<b>Noncustodial Parent's Income</b>						
\$0	0.5%	0.2%	0.5%	0.5%	--	<b>1.7%</b>
\$1-20,000	15.7%	8.5%	7.2%	3.7%	1.0%	<b>36.2%</b>
\$20,001 –30,000	9.5%	9.0%	9.2%	6.2%	0.2%	<b>34.2%</b>
\$30,001 –50,000	6.0%	3.2%	8.0%	6.5%	1.5%	<b>25.2%</b>
\$50,001 or more	0.2%	0.7%	0.2%	1.0%	0.5%	<b>2.7%</b>
<b>ALL CPs</b>	<b>31.9%</b>	<b>21.7%</b>	<b>25.2%</b>	<b>18.0%</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Domestic Relations Jackets (n = 99)						
	Custodial Parent's Income					
	\$0	\$1-20,000	\$20,001-30,000	\$30,001-50,000	\$50,001 or more	ALL NCPs
<b>Noncustodial Parent's Income</b>						
\$0	--	1.0%	1.0%	--	--	<b>2.0%</b>
\$1-20,000	5.1%	15.2%	7.1%	8.1%	--	<b>35.4%</b>
\$20,001 –30,000	--	5.1%	5.1%	8.1%	1.0%	<b>19.2%</b>
\$30,001 –50,000	1.0%	7.1%	8.1%	12.1%	2.0%	<b>30.3%</b>
\$50,001 or more	--	3.0%	2.0%	5.1%	3.0%	<b>13.1%</b>
<b>ALL CPs</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>31.3%</b>	<b>23.2%</b>	<b>33.3%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Adjustments to Income

The current Guideline provides several adjustments to income.

### *Child Care Expenses*

Child care is subtracted from the custodial parent's income under the current Guideline. This occurred in 32 percent of all cases reviewed, 25 percent of Domestic Relations cases, and 35 percent of Paternity and Support cases. The average amount of child care subtracted is \$3,300 per year. The average is about \$300 per year lower among Paternity and Support jackets than Domestic Relations jackets.

### *Child's Health Insurance Premiums*

The costs of the child's health insurance premium can be subtracted from the noncustodial parent's income under the current Guideline. This occurred in only six percent of the cases reviewed (4% of the Domestic Relations cases and 6% of the Paternity and Support cases). On average, the child's health insurance premium amounts to about \$1,600 per year.

### *Prior Support Orders*

Prior support orders are subtracted from the noncustodial parent's income under the current Guideline. This occurred in 19 percent of the cases reviewed. The percentage is higher among Paternity and Support cases (24%) than it was among Domestic Relations cases (8%). Unfortunately, we were not able to count the number of noncustodial parents with more than one prior support order; nonetheless, anecdotal evidence suggests this is a frequent occurrence.

### *Additional Children Not Subject to Support Order*

In 13 percent of the cases reviewed, the noncustodial parent had other children (not subject to the instant case) residing in the home at the time the order was established. The majority of noncustodial parents with multiple families have only one child living in the home (62%). On average, the oldest additional dependent living with these noncustodial parents is 10 years old.

## **RETROACTIVE SUPPORT**

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Although not specifically addressed in the current Guideline, case law has established that child support can be awarded retroactive to the birth of the child. Exhibit 19 shows that retroactive support is ordered in just under 15 percent of the cases reviewed. The average amount of retroactive support ordered is \$4,066, with an average monthly obligation for retroactive support of \$69. From the jackets reviewed, we were not able to determine the time period that the retroactive awards covered.

<b>Exhibit 19 Retroactive Support</b>			
	<b>All Jackets Reviewed (n=606)</b>	<b>Domestic Relations Jackets (n=199)</b>	<b>Paternity and Support Jackets (n=407)</b>
<b>Was Retroactive Support Ordered?</b>			
Yes	14.4%	10.1%	16.5%
No	84.1%	89.4%	81.5%
Reserved	1.5%	0.5%	2.0%

<b>Exhibit 19 Retroactive Support</b>			
	All Jackets Reviewed (n=606)	Domestic Relations Jackets (n=199)	Paternity and Support Jackets (n=407)
<b>Amount of Retroactive Support Ordered</b>	(n=78)	(n=17)	(n=61)
Less than \$500	11.5%	5.9%	13.1%
\$501 - \$1,000	7.7%	11.8%	6.6%
\$1,001 - \$1,500	14.1%	17.6%	13.1%
\$1,501 - \$2,000	10.3%	17.6%	8.2%
\$2,001 - \$2,500	9.0%	5.9%	9.8%
\$2,501 - \$5,000	25.6%	23.5%	26.2%
Over \$5,000	21.8%	17.6%	23.0%
Average Retroactive Support	\$4,065.58	\$3,433.60	\$4,241.71
Median Retroactive Support	\$2,395.50	\$1,800.00	\$2,500.00
<b>Monthly Obligation for Retroactive Support</b>	(n=75)	(n=15)	(n=60)
\$1 - \$25	30.7%	20.0%	33.3%
\$26 - \$50	30.7%	26.7%	31.7%
\$51 - \$100	14.7%	6.7%	16.6%
\$101 - \$150	14.7%	33.3%	10.0%
\$151 - \$200	4.0%	6.7%	3.3%
Over \$200	5.3%	6.7%	5.0%
Average Monthly Retroactive Order	\$68.70	\$85.00	\$64.63
Median Monthly Retroactive Order	\$50.00	\$54.17	\$43.33

## CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS

Exhibit 20 shows child support collections in 2000, 2001, 2002 and the first six months of 2003 by the annual amount of child support due. The analysis includes a larger number of cases than the case file review because it is from the automated system. Consequently, it only includes those cases that pay through the Collection and Disbursement Unit.

As evident from Exhibit 20, the higher the support order, the higher the compliance rate. For example, in the first six months of 2003, the compliance rate is 44 percent among those cases where the current support order is \$600 per year or less. In contrast, the compliance rate is 88 percent among cases where the support order is \$4,801 or more. Since \$600 is the minimum order amount and is to be applied when the noncustodial has gross income below \$7,500 per year, most of the noncustodial parents in this category are impoverished and have limited ability to pay. Higher order amounts, undoubtedly, reflect higher income and more discretionary income that may also be available for payment of child support than lower income noncustodial parents may have.

Exhibit 20 also shows the percentage of collections from income withholdings. According to federal requirements, wage withholding is to be universally applied. The percent of child support collections from income withholding is lower among cases with low order amounts and higher among cases with high order amounts. Again, this is arguably reflective of income. Those with low order amounts may have low incomes because they frequently

change jobs. The proportion of their child support payments resulting from wage withholding is lower because they may frequently work as day laborers or under-the-counter jobs where wages would not be withheld. In contrast, noncustodial parents with higher orders may be higher earners and more stably employed. Hence, a greater percent of their child support payments will come from routine income withholding.

<b>Exhibit 20</b> <b>Child Support Collections by Order Amount</b> <b>(from automated system data)</b>						
	Annual Current Support Due					
	\$600 or less	\$601 - \$1,200	\$1,201 - \$2,400	\$2,401 - \$4,800	\$4,801 or more	All Orders
<b>Number of Orders Established or Modified in...</b>						
2000	54	87	209	575	318	1,243
2001	85	85	192	453	372	1,187
2002	74	107	187	470	389	1,227
2003	24	51	60	143	183	461
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>1,641</b>	<b>1,262</b>	<b>4,118</b>
<b>Percent of Cases with Payments toward Current Support</b>						
2000	37.0%	50.6%	68.9%	73.6%	86.2%	72.8%
2001	44.6%	55.2%	77.8%	80.5%	87.5%	78.2%
2002	48.4%	59.5%	75.9%	81.2%	90.1%	79.4%
2003	44.3%	53.3%	67.3%	77.6%	87.9%	75.3%
<b>Average Dollars Collected per Order (excludes cases with \$0 collections)</b>						
2000	\$862	\$536	\$1,142	\$1,926	\$4,533	\$2,499
2001	\$635	\$798	\$1,274	\$2,500	\$5,455	\$3,092
2002	\$567	\$682	\$1,336	\$2,607	\$5,813	\$3,303
2003	\$383	\$502	\$1,070	\$1,749	\$3,525	\$2172
<b>Percent Collected by Income Withholding</b>						
0%	65.1%	66.9%	31.9%	14.1%	7.5%	20.6%
1 - 24%	8.4%	6.0%	7.5%	5.5%	2.8%	5.1%
25 - 49%	9.6%	6.0%	12.2%	9.1%	6.1%	8.3%
50 - 74%	7.8%	10.4%	15.1%	17.3%	13.9%	14.8%
75 - 99%	4.8%	4.4%	15.4%	28.0%	36.4%	26.1%
100%	4.2%	6.4%	17.9%	26.1%	33.4%	25.1%